

# #andshecycles

## Programme Overview

### **What is the #andshecycles Ambassador Programme?**

Across Ireland, data shows that just one in every 250 teenage girls cycle to school every day. The #andshecycles campaign was developed to explore, understand and address barriers to cycling for teenage girls. Emerging from the #andshecycles research, it is clear that cycling for girls is not nearly as accessible as cycling for boys.

The #andshecycles Ambassador Programme is a unique development of this campaign with a focus on addressing the teenage cycling gender gap. This will be achieved through building and supporting student leaders to take action to enable and empower teenage girls to cycle to school.

There are three programme objectives:

1. Develop role models & leaders for school cycling amongst teenage girls.
2. Empower teenage girls to shape the cycle-friendliness of their institutions.
3. Provide opportunities for teenage girls to cycle.

The #andshecycles Ambassador Programme, then, is about teenage girls taking action and leading the way so they themselves and others have the genuine option to cycle.

### **Inclusivity:**

The #andshecycles campaign aims to be inclusive of trans and intersex women and girls, as well as gender fluid people who are comfortable in a space that centres around the experience of young women. Please keep this in mind during your ambassador selection process if your application is successful.

### **Who can apply?**

This programme is in part about developing and supporting female role models and leaders to tackle the cycling gender gap. Schools can apply on behalf of female students or students who identify as trans female, gender fluid, intersex, or non-binary. Boys within mixed schools, while not eligible to be ambassadors, are welcomed and encouraged to support their school's ambassadors to address the cycling gender gap.

Applying schools must be an active Green-Schools secondary school that is currently working on or has previously been awarded a Green Flag for the Travel or Global Citizenship Travel themes.

Successful schools are expected to select 5-8 ambassadors.

### **Is the programme only for cyclists?**

This programme is open to girls who do not cycle but would like to, as well as girls who cycle. We welcome those who are passionate about creating change to enable girls to cycle!

### **Do I receive any resources for participating?**

Successful applicants will receive an 'Introductory Pack' including a branded #andshecycles Ambassador hoody, pin, notebook, and stickers.

### **What is involved in the programme?**

The programme involves four stages:

1. Application stage, where schools apply and are selected.
2. Training stage, where ambassadors are briefed and trained in a selection of skills that will help them take action to address the cycling gender gap.
3. Action stage, where students take action to enable and empower girls to cycle to school. A portfolio is prepared to display the planning and execution of each action, as well as to document all other notable achievements in raising awareness about the campaign. So, make sure to take lots of photos!
4. Award stage, where each ambassador/team of ambassadors are awarded their medal and certificate of completion.

### **Will there be opportunities to network with other students?**

Schools will have the opportunity to meet with other ambassadors from across the country at our in-person training event and other online and in-person gatherings that take place throughout the 'Action Stage' of the programme between October and March. These gatherings will be an opportunity to share ideas, support one another, generate collective motivation, collaborate, and build solidarity as ambassadors for tackling the cycling gender gap.

### **What kind of training is provided?**

As an ambassador school, part of your commitment to (and part of the value of) the programme is to attend our in-person training event. This is vital for getting you in the frame of mind, and getting you equipped with the skills necessary, to take action to enable and empower teenage girls to cycle to school. The training will incorporate topics such as:

- Barriers to cycling
- Designing a survey
- Action brainstorming and planning,
- Advocacy skills and impactful effort
- Presentation & communication skills,

As a result, depending on the actions you choose, as an ambassador school, you will be provided with an opportunity to develop highly transferable skills in the areas of leadership, communication, community engagement and negotiation, public speaking, event management, and so on.

### **What kinds of actions should be taken?**

Overall, this programme is about students taking the lead with action, so creativity, passion and resolve are welcome and necessary attributes in being an ambassador. As described above, our training will facilitate and guide the development and implementation of a range of actions that can contribute to the enablement and empowerment of teenage girls to cycle to school:

- carrying out a school cyclability audit, which is an assessment of cycling infrastructure and safety near your school.
- creating a school cycling policy,
- organising a group cycle to school,
- setting up and facilitating a panel discussion on the cycling gender gap in your school,
- creating a social media/poster campaign to promote teenage girls cycling/challenge cycling as 'A Boy's Thing'.

These are just some examples of ideas, more of which can be found in the Communications Toolkit. There is great scope for creativity in choosing and implementing your own actions. In thinking about actions, it can be helpful to reflect on the core objectives of the programme (listed in the first section of this document) and how you can take action to realise these aims. We will be there to help you along the way.

### **What is expected of participating schools?**

By applying to participate you commit to the following actions:

- To attend the in-person training event in October.
- To attend at least one of the three subsequent Network Gathering events (2 online, 1 in-person) between November and March.
- To complete at least two substantial actions to enable and empower teenage girls to cycle.
- To submit a portfolio showcasing all actions and campaign work carried out in your school during your time on the programme (e.g., surveys, polls, artwork, guest speakers, cycling events, workshops, etc).
- To have some or all ambassadors represent your school at the Awards Ceremony in May.

**Important note:** In your actions as an ambassador school, it is vital that, at all times throughout the programme, you treat others that you are involved or engaging with, with the respect and courtesy.

### **What are the awards?**

The awards ceremony is the final occasion for ambassadors from all participating schools to come together to showcase and celebrate their work. Completed portfolios will be displayed for all schools. Students will be presented with their medal and certificate of participation. On the day there are

activities, guest speakers, and opportunities for photos. Refreshments upon arrival and lunch are also provided on the day.

**Key dates (subject to change):**

